



CONNECTED
CREATIVE COLLABORATION



Linen Lab

Project Summary:

FE McWilliam Gallery seeks proposals from artists, designers and researchers who wish to participate in the *Linen Lab* project. This year-long programme of innovative creative collaboration and engagement will culminate in a gallery exhibition in Autumn 2019.

As one of the earliest forms of woven fabric in human history, linen has embedded itself in both Eastern and Western cultures. More locally, linen production has been a hugely significant part of our agricultural and industrial heritage for generations. As the textiles industry responds to current pressures to operate more ethically and sustainably, linen is gaining a wider reputation as a uniquely eco-friendly, versatile fabric that can be cultivated and produced without pesticides. Fabric manufacturers are finding new uses for linen and researchers are finding ways to apply linen fibres as substitutes for carbon fibres in skis, tennis rackets and even violins.

At the FE McWilliam Gallery, we hope to inspire a new generation of young people to try out a range of approaches to working with linen, with the support and guidance of artists, designers and researchers. The creative team assigned to the project will be challenged to put local young people at the centre of the activity as they develop their own work for the *Linen Lab* exhibition. Creatives and young people will share an active role in shaping the project from the outset. Collaboration, playfulness and experimentation are essential to the success of the engagement activity.

The project is part of *Connected*, a new audience engagement initiative being delivered across the borough of Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon in 2018/19. Co-funded by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's Local Government Challenge Fund, *Connected* aims to build active creative partnerships between cultural venues, artists and local audiences. *Linen Lab* is offering opportunities to artists in partnership with the Linen Biennale N. Ireland.

Your Proposal:

Your proposal to participate in *Linen Lab* should describe your professional practice, your current interest in/experience of linen or flax, and outline how you would approach the project. We are interested in proposals that communicate an intent to develop ideas through investigative experimental practice. Describe how you might work collaboratively with other artists, designers or researchers and which themes and processes you are particularly interested in.

The *Linen Lab* community participants will be recruited from local schools, colleges and youth groups, ranging in age from 11 to 19. They will meet regularly at the gallery and experience a variety of exciting opportunities to work with textiles, as well as a chance to become involved in the exhibition planning and installation. Your proposal should clearly outline how you might contribute to our *Linen Lab* youth programme. There will be opportunities for Skype/FaceTime gatherings for anyone unable to travel to the gallery.

Fees:

The maximum fee for each successful proposal is **£3750**, based on a daily rate of £125 per day and a maximum of 30 days' involvement in the project. This may be used for studio time, research, collaboration with others on the project, or work on the engagement programme. We also welcome proposals that come in below the maximum budget. Travel expenses will be paid, by agreement, in addition to the fee.

Selection Process:

A two-stage process will be used to assess submissions for this project.

Stage One: Assessment of written submission

Please send:

- A written proposal, max 1xA4 page, detailing your approach to the project
- A recent CV
- 6-8 images of your work (video/audio clips also accepted) and/or samples of written research
- An outline budget

Selection Criteria:

Criteria	Max Score	Weighting	Max Weighted Score
Quality of previous work and demonstrated capacity to deliver the proposal	5	x6	30
Quality, innovation and relevance of the proposal to the brief	5	x6	30
Potential benefit of the proposed engagement activity for project participants	5	X6	30
Costs: Please provide an outline budget indicating the number of days you are available to work on the project in terms of studio time, research and your contribution to the youth engagement programme	5	x2	10
Total			100

Stage Two: Shortlisted artists/designers/researchers will be invited to the gallery (or via Skype) to give a short presentation to the selection panel about their proposal.

Stage 2 presentations will take place on Monday 23rd July

Should you have any queries, please contact: louise.rice@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

Submissions are to be received on or before **Monday 16th July 2018 at 12.00 noon** and returned by email to: **Louise Rice, Community Arts Development Officer**

E: louise.rice@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk